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Remarks

Claims 16-20, 22-27 and 30 remain in this application. Claims 1-15, 21 and 28-29 have been canceled without prejudice. Claims 16 and 27 are independent claims. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 16-20, 23 and 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by European Patent document 0396207.

Claims 21, 22 and 24-26 were only objected to and were deemed to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 16 now includes the features of previous claim 21. Therefore, applicants believe that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is moot, because claim 16 contains allowable subject matter in compliance with the Examiner's opinion, for which Applicants thank the Examiner.

Claim 27 has been amended to contain the limitations of claims 28 and 29. The Examiner did not provide arguments why he believes claims 27-30 not be allowable. However, Applicants believe that claim 27 is clearly allowable over '207.

In fact, the prior art is silent at least about a sinker's laminar body having an upper side provided with a sinker actuation heel, a beak protruding on said upper side and being directed toward the actuation heel, wherein the lower side of said laminar body that lies opposite with respect to the upper side provided with said actuation heel has a step-like profile, with two sinker resting surfaces that are substantially flat and parallel to each other, respectively a lower resting surface and an upper resting surface that is spaced upwardly from said lower resting surface.

Document '207 discloses sinkers 474 (see figure 17 and page 27, lines 21-23) which are curvilinear and do not feature a laminar body whose lower side has two sinker resting surfaces that are substantially flat and parallel to each other. As it can be also seen from figure 2a of '207, the only resting surface of sinker 474 is the sinker actuation heel's bottom surface.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully solicit allowance of the pending claims.

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Respectfully submitted,



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